

**KENDRICK PARK DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Thursday, January 6, 2011 – 4:00 PM**  
**Town Room, Town Hall**  
**MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Peg Roberts, Liz Rosenberg, Hope Crolius, Marilyn Rodzwell and Susan Sheldon

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Peter Blier, Christina Mata and Alan Snow

**STAFF PRESENT:** John Musante, Town Manager  
Dave Ziomek, Director of Conservation and Development  
Guilford Mooring, Superintendent of Public Works  
Christine Brestrup, Senior Planner

**CONSULTANTS:** Steve Cecil and David O'Connor, The Cecil Group

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1. **Announcements** – none
2. **Election of Officers** - none
3. **Minutes** – no vote was taken on the Minutes.
4. **Site Analysis** – Presentation and discussion of site information and
5. **Program** – Presentation and discussion of programmatic elements

Mr. Cecil began by reviewing the site analysis and site observations made by the consultants and combined this with a review of the park program. He asked for responses from the committee members on the site observations and on the park program in preparation for the upcoming public meeting.

There will be no proscenium stage and stage house but there will be a small performance area.

The play area will accommodate 30 children plus associated grown-ups. The play area needs a sense of enclosure and real barriers.

A place for restrooms could be set aside for the future. Mr. Ziomek observed that restrooms are needed downtown but they shouldn't be imposed on Kendrick Park. They are needed closer to Town Hall. Mr. Cecil observed that the park will not be active enough on a regular basis to require restrooms. Ms. Rodzwell asked about combining the bus stop and the restrooms. Ms. Brestrup stated that there is a cost to install restrooms as well as a cost to maintain them.

Mr. Cecil stated that everything in the park should be environmentally sound and that there should be no off-site impacts from the park.

Ms. Roberts recommended that there be flowering shrubs rather than perennials because of the issue of maintenance. The consultants stated that the plantings should celebrate seasonal differences and that a small area might be designated for perennials and annuals that could be maintained by a small group of people. For instance, Falmouth has groups who maintain the planting beds. The park should be adaptable. Seasonal plantings can come and go. Daffodils can be mixed in with something that will carry over after the daffodils die.

Mr. Cecil noted that there should be some aspect of the park that tells the story of Kendrick Park as well as the story of Amherst. Ms. Roberts observed that William Clark imported many trees from Japan and this is part of Amherst's heritage. It was suggested that the park might include plants that were among those imported by William Clark and there should be labels on the trees. Ms. Crolius noted that a Japanese stewartia had been planted in the park.

The consultants suggested that non-invasive exotic plants could be included in the plant list for the park.

Mr. Cecil stated that the design should encourage access to all activity areas of the park. The park should be planned with a notion of the population load and where people will park. The edges of the park could be re-programmed to include parking. Otherwise the default would be that parking would occur on private lots and side streets.

Ms. Roberts noted that thought should be given to crossing the streets to access the park and that crosswalks should be incorporated into the park design. Also the ARA has looked at improving the Pray Street area.

Mr. Cecil observed that pedestrians can be channeled into the park by a fence or wall.

Ms. Rodzwell noted that there is a small public parking lot off Pray Street.

Mr. Mooring stated that bike lanes will need to be maintained. The DPW would like to put one on Triangle Street. North Pleasant Street could be made one-way, either way.

Mr. Musante talked about the different modes of access to the park – pedestrians, bikes, cars and buses and noted that they would all need to be accommodated.

Mr. Cecil observed that businesses might object to a one-way street. He suggested that parking could be moved to the park side, to get a more continuous row of parking. People could then park their cars and get out on the park side and enter the park without crossing the street.

Mr. Cecil stated that there should be limited lighting in the park. The design should light the park and not the surroundings. Cut-offs should be used.

Ms. Rosenberg asked about the use of photovoltaics to power the lights. Mr. Cecil noted that there are two choices to be made – the source of the light and the power generation for the lights.

Mr. Cecil stated that the consultants had prepared a summary of the tree status. He showed a plan which indicated where trees should be removed. He noted that in terms of circulation, McClellan and Pray Streets hit the park on opposite sides from one another. Views are limited. The design should consider views into the park from the walking paths. In terms of landform, the Triangle Street end of the park has a steep slope. Triangle Street may be widened, which may increase the steepness of the slope. The view out from the corner of Triangle Street and East Pleasant Street is not nice and this corner should be screened. The view out from the park is not uniformly good.

Mr. O'Connor stated that landforms and tree canopy are the most influential items in shaping the park. He also noted that there is a lot of pedestrian traffic passing through the park and that the gateways to the park can be shaped without allowing a full view into or out of the park.

Mr. Musante stated that we should think long-term about the development opportunities in the vicinity of the park.

Mr. Cecil stated that the park should have a clean edge and should not seem like part of the private properties surrounding it. He also suggested planting trees on the east side of East Pleasant Street to incorporate the east side of East Pleasant Street into the park.

**6. Conceptual Plans** – Presentation and discussion of conceptual plans

The consultants described Alternative A, the Circulation and Sequence Plan. The southern entry plaza would have granite walls. There would be a change in grade. There would be a paved plaza, with a wall along the east edge. The performance space could also function as the ice rink. There could be locations along the walks for artwork. The north end of the park would be primarily green. The corners would be formal. There would be a programmable area south of the performance space for tents and fairs. There would be continuous parking along North Pleasant Street with a sidewalk along the edge. The walk along Triangle Street would be pulled back from the edge.

Mr. Musante asked how this design could accommodate a mid-week farmers' market with music and more social events.

Mr. Cecil noted that vendors could park along the west edge of the park. He also observed that parts of the three alternatives could be "mixed and matched".

Mr. O'Connor stated that reinforced turf could be used for these infrequent events. It can take the weight of a fire truck. It needs to be watered.

Mr. Cecil stated that the southern end of the park is the most adaptable. It can have a "roll-over" curb – sloped or rounded. Tents can be arranged near the sidewalk. A pavilion can be built on the high point. It can still be made to be accessible – at a 1:20 grade.

The consultants described Alternative B, a Series of Spaces and Places. The spaces can be carved out and reinforced with trees and shrubs. The south end would be a crushed stone plaza. It would be a good place for a market. There would be a sidewalk along the edge of the park. The design uses the spaces where the buildings were and tries not to take out trees. The play space could have public art with seating around the outside. The center of the lawn area could be an ice rink in the winter. There could be terraced steps used for seats in the performance area, with trees dotted throughout the terraces.

Mr. O'Connor noted that there could be small areas for flower beds and shrub roses.

Mr. Cecil recommended planting a lot of trees to build up the canopy. Parking could be added on the west side of East Pleasant Street. This may be a problem because of the busy road and there is less room for parking here than on the east side of North Pleasant Street.

The consultants described Alternative C, Layers and Land. There is tree canopy and open plane in this design. The remnants of the terracing are maintained. There could be a space with a water feature at the south end.

Mr. Mooring noted that this design has a crosswalk in front of the bus stop. UMass Transit prefers the crosswalk to be behind the bus stop. Mr. Cecil stated that the bus stop could be used as the entry to the park. The southern field would be good for a market below Pray and McClellan Street. Tan Brook could be marked with stones on the surface. The ice rink could be located below the terrace. There could be a pavilion on top of the terrace with a walk going east-west. Seating could be located on the slope. The back side of the pavilion or pergola could be a stage. Mr. Cecil stated that 3 or 4 feet could be added to the mound at the north end of the park and it could be made flat on top. The play area could be in the northwest corner, carved out of the hillside. The loop path around the park could be interrupted in places along the west side.

Committee members discussed the three concepts with the consultants.

Mr. Musante noted that one goal of the design is to channel pedestrian traffic away from the residential neighborhoods.

Mr. O'Connor noted that Alternative B offers many options for circulation.

Ms. Roberts stated that we want a design that will satisfy people who want something new and people who love what is there now.

The committee discussed scheduling a public forum for January 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. There would be an Open House first, with a presentation to follow. The committee planned to meet the week of January 13<sup>th</sup> to look at the alternatives and send comments to the consultants prior to the public forum.

Mr. Mooring noted that there are overhead utility lines along East Pleasant Street, which may present a problem for the trees that are proposed there. He said that the overhead lines on North Pleasant and along Triangle Street may need to be put underground.

Mr. Cecil suggested that the public should be offered a comment sheet at the public forum to write down what they liked and what they didn't like about the three designs and that the committee and consultants should make it clear to the public that they can "mix and match" parts of the three plans.

Ms. Roberts suggested that the committee could present the Park Program. Skateboarding should not be emphasized as an activity in the program. It may occur but it should not be encouraged. Vandalism is also an issue.

Mr. Cecil suggested that a "Friends of Kendrick Park" group could be established to help with paying for items in the park and to support maintenance. Pieces of art or special garden items could be paid for by the Friends. Also, temporary art might be incorporated for a period of one year.

Mr. Musante stated that he did not like the proposal of adding soil to make the northern mound larger. It would make the park less welcoming and create a visual barrier.

Mr. Cecil noted that a higher mound would tend to separate the two sides of the park and perhaps buffer some of the noise from the east side of the park.

Mr. Cecil suggested that when we get closer to construction we can stake out the plan on the ground. He also stated that a barrier of 2 to 2 ½ feet in height will be necessary to block children from running out of the play area. He cautioned that play areas can become "hang-out" areas.

The committee decided to meet again on January 13<sup>th</sup>.

7. **New Business** – none
8. **Future Meetings** – January 13<sup>th</sup> and January 27<sup>th</sup>
9. **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Christine M. Brestrup, Senior Planner